



New **balljointed** front suspension for **MGC**

Converting to power steering is one way to lighten the load of an MGC, but now there is an alternative that also gets around the need for kingpins.

As part of a continuing suspension program carried out by MGOC Spares, and following on from the MGB Evo 3 suspension and Club Rear Panhard Rod, this latest suspension development for the MGC has been engineered by the same accredited suspension specialist and represents a significant advancement over the original. The initial impetus for developing it was brought about by the non-availability of MGC king pins and a desire to offer owners an alternative to keep their cars on the road, but the design brief set out to offer much more. Benefits include longevity, increased driver feedback and reduced stiction from the kingpin/thrust washer

design leading to lighter steering, all the while keeping the appearance as close to the original as was practical.

To ensure the new suspension was optimised to get the best out of the MGC, Doug Smith at MG Motorsport lent his unrivalled MGC expertise, with the first production kit fitted in under six hours in his Bovingdon workshops. Doug said: 'We were very pleased to be involved with this project, and are delighted with the results of the first fitting to a car (a car which we supplied and have been reconditioning since 2011). It has made a huge improvement to the handling, and perfectly complements our existing products, as well as making the steering lighter.'

Chris Bentley, MGOC Spares Sales & Marketing Director, added: 'With the values of MGCs increasing, we recognised the need to enhance the driving experience without adversely affecting the appearance of the car. That is why we ensure that all our MGC upgrades - including power steering - are bolt-on. This MGC balljointed front suspension uses some of the original components, which helps to keep the visual changes to a minimum. Where we have designed new parts, we have tried to make them as unobtrusive as possible.'

'The kit includes balljointed MGC top and bottom stubs, castor shims, fixings, top wishbone pivot arms, spacers for the lower arms, new studs and bump stops. You



This new balljointed suspension has been developed to offer driving improvements, but without looking dramatically different on the car.

need to reuse the lower arms (they are forged items and are usually serviceable), and also the old steering arms and wishbone pivot. You can run with standard bushes, but there are lots of uprating options on bushes, dampers, torsion bars etc if you want to go for a fast road spec. Owners may also then want to uprate to a thicker front anti-roll bar, and we recommend that a four wheel alignment check is carried out after fitment.'

The final word should go to David Miller, owner of the MGC pictured and the first to enjoy the advantages of this latest development. 'As part of my role with P&O, I have been involved in the design and development of successive generations of ferries,' he told us. 'As such I seek to improve existing design where possible and innovate where not. With this background, the MGC is an attractive project because BL never developed the car to its true potential. This gives me the opportunity to create the Mk2 version that Abingdon never produced. In so doing, I am trying to stay as close to the original as possible and avoid creating a kit car.'

'I started with a good base, as my car is one of the final University Motors batch (so it has revised gearbox and back axle ratios although not Downton modified). The next stage was to produce a scheme of work

based on criticism in contemporary road tests. Using MGOC for spares and MG Motorsport for engineering, we have worked through my specification that included improving the handling with parabolic springs and GAZ dampers on the rear, plus uprated torsion and anti-roll bars with Spax dampers on the front. We also improved the engine's ability to rev with a gas-flowed head, balanced reciprocating parts, lightened flywheel and revised cam, plus an uprated radiator, oil cooler and a 123 ignition.

'And then there is the steering! I have always found this to be slow and ponderous in operation. Combining this new innovative balljointed front suspension with an MG Motorsport high ratio steering rack has totally transformed the car's driving dynamics. Their pleasant weighting, direct action and smooth operation make my car the ideal long distance tourer it always should have been. This improvement is all the more significant because we included an increase in tyre cross-section in this rebuild. I was concerned that the wider tyres would require more effort for low speed steering, but this has not proved to be the case. In fact, the steering effort is considerably reduced, to the point where I have been able to fit a smaller diameter steering wheel



without losing any comfort.

'Having now had the opportunity to drive the car on motorways, fast A-roads and smaller country lanes with these improvements fitted, I am very impressed. The upgrade gives a feeling of balance and control that was never there before, and the end result is a much smoother and faster line through the corners.'

Priced at £895, the new balljointed front suspension is available to buy via mail order from MGOC Spares on 01954 230928 or from MG Motorsport on 01442 832019.